



# HOUSE COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

CHAIRMAN JERROLD NADLER

## **Support H.R. 7946, the “Veteran Service Recognition Act of 2022”**

H.R. 7946, the “Veteran Service Recognition Act of 2022,” facilitates the ability of noncitizen service members to apply for naturalization and creates pathways for noncitizens and their families to obtain lawful permanent status in the United States. Since the Revolutionary War, immigrants have served in the U.S. armed forces in every major conflict. Today, there are approximately 45,000 immigrants in active service. For their sacrifices, we are obligated to provide them and their families with opportunities to become citizens of the country they defended.

Unfortunately, some otherwise eligible veterans were removed before they could become U.S. citizens due to convictions stemming from trauma related to their military service. Any veteran who risked life and limb for their country and shoulders these invisible pains every day should not be deported and separated from their families or prevented from claiming their hard-earned Veterans Affairs benefits.

H.R. 7946 will ensure that our noncitizen service members, veterans, and their families are treated with the fairness and dignity they deserve.

### **WHAT THE BILL DOES**

This bill improves opportunities for noncitizen service members to apply for naturalization while in the armed forces. DHS and DOD will implement a program that ensures noncitizen service members have the ability to file for naturalization during basic training, or as early as otherwise possible. The bill also establishes a review process for noncitizen veterans, active service members, and their families in removal proceedings. This legislation directs DHS to create a Military Family Immigration Advisory Committee, which will review cases in removal proceedings. The committee will provide recommendations on whether prosecutorial discretion is warranted or if removal proceedings should continue.

In addition, the bill will provide opportunities for noncitizen veterans who were removed or ordered removed and were not convicted of serious crimes, to obtain lawful permanent resident status. The DHS Secretary cannot waive grounds of inadmissibility based on serious crimes. The immediate relatives of service members or veterans with an approved immigrant petition will also have the ability to adjust their status and obtain a green card as long as they are otherwise admissible. The bill includes narrow, discretionary waivers to help spouses, children, and parents of U.S. citizen service members and veterans in the United States who cannot adjust because they entered without inspection or are inadmissible for other reasons related to entry.

The Veteran Service Recognition Act is narrowly tailored to help a small and specific number of individuals eligible for relief. The solutions this bill offers will eventually eliminate the need to assist deported veterans in returning to the United States.

### **H.R. 7946 is supported by many immigration and veterans organizations, including:**

American Legion	The National Immigration Forum	FWD.us
National Immigrant Justice Center	Unidos	Human Rights First
Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America	Veterans for American Ideals	Secure Families Initiative